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discarded the antiquated literary language and given official sanction to the use of the popular form of speech.

It is to be regretted that the selections for reading which occupy over half of the whole work are printed in three columns, running across the page, so that the book must be handled in the most inconvenient way. There seems no good reason for printing a transcribed text beside the original and the translation throughout the whole two hundred pages. A transcription of the first fifty pages ought to be sufficient, though the vowel signs might be introduced in the original text for the remainder.

The grammar proper is, of course, short, since modern Persian enjoys a grammatical system of about the same simplicity as English. An English-Persian vocabulary of about one hundred pages forms the third part of the book. It is safe to say that for the precise purpose in view, Dr. Rosen's book is the best in existence.

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KLUGE'S DIE SCHRIFT DER MYKENIER.¹

The brilliant and scholarly demonstration by Mr. A. J. Evans in 1894-5 of the existence of pre-Phoenician systems of writing in the Ægean region has proved a fatal source of temptation to Herr H. Kluge. This gentleman has undertaken the task of deciphering the inscriptions in question, and by a series of assumptions has succeeded in eliciting words and sentences, making a gibberish which bears some resemblance to Greek. The performance does not merit serious and detailed criticism. The problem which Herr Kluge has incompetently attempted to solve still awaits its Champollion.

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PUBLICATIONS OF THE GRATZ COLLEGE.²

By the last will of Mr. Hyman Gratz, of Philadelphia, a trust estate was created, in the year 1893, for the establishment and support of a college for the education of Jews residing in the city and county of Philadelphia.

Before coming to a final conclusion regarding the character and scope of such a college, the board of trustees resolved that meanwhile a series of lectures upon topics of Jewish interest be given during the year 1895-6, and consequently several scholars from abroad and of this country were invited to deliver a number of lectures of this series.

The volume of publications before us contains, in the first place, the "Memoir of Hyman Gratz," by Moses A. Dropsie, Esq., and the first report

¹ DIE SCHRIFT DER MYKENIER. Eine Untersuchung über System und Lautwert der von Arthur J. Evans entdeckten vorphönizischen Schriftzeichen. Von H. Kluge. Mit 4 Schrifttafeln und 80 Abbildungen und Reproduktionen von Inschriften. Cöthen: Verlag von Otto Schultze, 1897. viii + 111 pp. M. 8.

² PUBLICATIONS OF THE GRATZ COLLEGE. Vol. I. Philadelphia: Press of Levetttype Company, 1897. Published by the College. ix + 204 pp.

of the board of trustees of the Gratz College. An appendix (pp. 31-48) contains a synopsis of the lectures delivered at the college, namely, a course of six lectures on rabbinic theology, by S. Schechter, of the University of Cambridge, England, and a course of seven lectures by different scholars. Among these is one on "The Site of Paradise and the Babylonian Nimrod Epic," by Professor Paul Haupt, of the Johns Hopkins University; one on "The Hygienic Laws of the Jews," by Dr. Solomon Solis-Cohen, and one on "The Jewish Calendar," by Dr. Cyrus Adler, of the Smithsonian Institution.

The most interesting and valuable part of this publication are the four lectures which are given in full. The first of these lectures is on "Italian Jewish Literature," by the lately deceased Rev. Sabato Morais, LL.D. After briefly referring to the early settlement of the Jews in pagan Rome, where they enjoyed full religious liberties until these were curtailed by the Christian emperors, the lecture describes the gradual development of literary activity among the Italian Jews. Of course, within the narrow limits of a lecture only the most notable authors in the different branches of literature could be presented. Sabbethai Donnolo, a botanist, physician, and astronomer of Oria, in the tenth century, was the first Jew who wrote on science in the Hebrew language. Nathan ben Yechiel, of Rome, in the eleventh century, arranged the first talmudic lexicon, the *Aruch*, on which all later works in this line are based. The genial and humorous Hebrew poet, Immanuel, flourishing in the thirteenth century, is then introduced with an analysis of several of the twenty-eight cantos contained in his celebrated work, called *Machbereth*. Then follow a biographical sketch and characteristics of the literary work of Azariah De Rossi, of Mantua (sixteenth century), who is rightly regarded to be the first sound critic of modern times. The lecturer, himself a native of sunny Italy, states in conclusion, with justifiable pride, that, on good authority, over twenty-two hundred persons who left evidence of their literary activity are reckoned as natives, or permanent residents, of the classic peninsula.

The second lecture (pp. 75-103) is on "The History and Future of the Text of the Talmud," by Rev. Dr. M. Jastrow. As may be expected of the work of an author so eminent as a scholar and writer, this lecture is highly interesting and instructive. After some preliminary remarks explaining the origin and contents of the two component parts of the Talmud, the Mishnah and Gemara, the lecturer refers to the pre-original history of the talmudic texts, as both the Mishnah and the Gemara existed and developed for centuries in the mouth of tradition before having been reduced to writing. In spite of the religious care which the rabbis took to preserve the oral traditions in the very words in which they were heard from the lips of former teachers, variations and corruptions of the text arose, partly in consequence of the migration of the material from Palestine to Babylonia, and partly in consequence of the fallibility of human memory. Curious blunders that arose in this way are illustrated in the lecture.

From the time when the oral traditions were reduced to writing began the main variations and corruptions of the text, due to the ignorance or carelessness of copyists, and also in consequence of the confusing abbreviations of proper names and technical terms.

After the appearing of the Talmud in print, which began 1494, the text had to suffer, not only through typographical errors and unskilled proofreading,¹ but also through willful mutilations at the hand of ignorant and fanatic censors. Passages which they imagined to be hostile to Christianity were omitted or altered by them, and names of nations and sects which they suspected as having reference to Christians were changed.

Dr. Jastrow speaks also of the meritorious labors of modern scholars who applied their erudition and ingenuity to the task of restoring a correct text by consulting extant manuscripts and early editions of the Talmud, and by collating parallel passages and incidental quotations in the earliest works on talmudic subjects. Regarding a future edition of the Talmud, the learned lecturer makes some important suggestions, which he sums up in the following words: "What we need is a *complete* Talmud, with an approximately correct text and intelligible variorum notes, and with a graphic illustration of the growth of the talmudic text, from its beginning as a verbal tradition to its close and final redaction."

The third lecture (pp. 107-165) is on "Jewish Physicians and the Contributions of the Jews to the Science of Medicine," by Aaron Friedenwald, M.D. The subject treated in this lecture is naturally divided and subdivided according to different historical periods, as: Medicine of the Old Testament; talmudic medicine; the contributions of Jewish physicians in the development of Arabic medicine; their activity in different countries in the Middle Ages and in modern times. The author acknowledges his indebtedness to his predecessors, Carmoly, Landau, Baas, and others, to whose works on the same subject he frequently refers. His is the merit of having treated the subject in a lucid and attractive way. The name Chanina Ben *Chania*, on p. 116, is evidently a typographical error for Chanina Ben *Chama*. The statement on the same page that the celebrated Babylonian teacher, Rab, "distinguished himself in the study of anatomy, and expended large sums of money in procuring subjects of anatomy," must be taken *cum grano salis*. The talmudic source to which this statement probably refers (Sanhedrin 5b) merely mentions that this teacher had spent some time with a shepherd in order to become acquainted, for ritual purposes, with certain blemishes occurring in domestic animals.

The subject of the last lecture, or rather paper (pp. 167-204), is "The Psalms and their Place in the Liturgy," by Rev. Dr. K. Kohler. In glowing language the learned author speaks of the Psalms as mankind's holiest treasury of inspiration. In order to demonstrate the matchless

¹ In this connection, attention may be called to a typographical mistake on p. 82 of this lecture, where Erubin 2a stands instead of Abodah Zarah 2a.

beauty and grandeur of the Psalms he compares them with the ancient hymns which represent the highest stage of religious poetry among other nations, especially the Aryan Gathas and Vedas, and the Babylonian hymns, and shows how widely they differ in spirit and tone. Before entering into a closer examination of the origin and character of the Psalms, Dr. Kohler propounds the question why music and song did not find a place in the mode of worship mapped out in the Pentateuch, though both music and song were well known at that time. He finds the answer in the circumstance that song and music had assumed a voluptuous character in the idolatrous worship of the surrounding nations. The Hebrew lawgiver did, therefore, insist on a chaste and serious mode of worship, and preferred the sound of the horn and trumpet to the mellow and sensuous tones of the flute and the cithara. Not before the lyric song of the Hebrew bards had become chastened through suffering and woe, and attained its spiritual beauty and depth through penitence and grief, was it applied to the temple service.

Dr. Kohler emphatically disagrees with those modern Bible critics who ascribe all the Psalms to late post-exilic writers, and who assume that even where the Psalmist speaks in the singular of his anxieties and enemies, or of his hopes and victories, he always represents the nation with its troubles and Messianic expectations. The lecturer rather holds, with tradition, that a powerful individuality, if not David himself then some great personality of his stamp, was portrayed in those fervent appeals to God for help, and those expressions of reliance upon the Rock of Salvation. While admitting the late collection of the Psalms, he maintains that most of them were recomposed to suit the new conditions, but in fact were composed in more ancient times.

In conclusion, Dr. Kohler speaks at length of the prominent place of the Psalms in the liturgy of the synagogue as well as the church, and in the ritual for private devotion and on special occasions.

No one can read this lecture, of the rich contents of which we offered here but a very brief résumé, without gaining a fuller appreciation of the immeasurable value of the biblical collection of sacred songs called the Psalter of David.

The trustees of the Gratz College deserve great credit for the publication of these highly interesting and instructive papers.

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